

CENTENNIAL

Historical Discourse,

BY

REV. ISAAC GRIER, D. D.

Delivered at Buffalo Church, Buffalo X Roads,
Union Co., Pa., June 15, 1876.

Presbyterian.

Schoch, Pr., Mifflinburg, Pa.





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The Buffalo Presbyterian Church.

BY JAMES AIKEN.

[Read at the pleasant meeting at that Church, on June 15, 1876. Mr. Aiken's object in writing this poem was to express his gratitude for more than half a century of kindness.]

Though not a member of this Church,
Nor e'en a Presbyterian, I,
Must love the generous men whose stores
So oft my every want supply.

For half a century, and more,
I've known the people of this charge ;
And oft, full oft, have I enjoyed
Their hospitality so large.

When a young man, I aimed to teach,
And English Grammar was my theme,
My patrons and my pupils won
My gratitude and high esteem.

A home for me was every house ;
Friendly and true was every heart ;
And as I live, it grieved me sore,
From such true noble friends to part.

And thus, since eighteen twenty-four,
This valley is my *beau ideal*
Of landscape beauty and of men,
Whose friendship is so true, so real !

And pray why not ? This Christian Church
Has been a moral pioneer ;
And other Christian Churches, too,
Have taught pure Bible truth so clear.

Some difference of opinion still
A careful scrutiny may spy ;
But in the *vital, saving* truths,
The watchmen now see eye to eye !

And for one hundred years, and more,
This Church, the Bible for its guide,
Has taught the men, and women, too,
Whose children now are scattered wide.

And when in the far mighty West,
The light of truth shines out so clear,
Who knows but its first feeble ray
Was, peradventure, kindled here ?

CENTENNIAL HISTORICAL DISCOURSE.

As this is the centennial year of our existence as a nation, since our Declaration of Independence, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, with great propriety, has seen fit to call on all the pastors of the churches to deliver a discourse on the history of their church on or about the first Sabbath of July, which has been designated as a "Day of Praise and Thanksgiving to God for the manifold blessings which He has crowed us as a people."

As the most authentic account which tradition gives of the organization of Buffalo Church has fixed it in the year 1773, we are carried back three years previous to the Declaration of Independence, which places our Church among the earliest organizations on the West Branch of the Susquehanna, and as early as the Churches of Northumberland and Sunbury, with which it united in calling the first pastor on these, then, frontier settlements.

As we the inhabitants of this beautiful valley, so thickly settled and well cultivated, look back more than a century, the first thought seems to be—O what a surprising change has a century wrought! Can it be that this valley, which now looks like such an old settled country, not a century ago, was the home of wandering savages, living chiefly by hunting, and capturing its elk, and deer, and fish; with here and there an occasional small patch of corn! It may here be proper to make a remark in reference to the Indian tribes that roamed these mountains and valleys in those days. We find what we suppose was a general name, embracing many of the smaller tribes, the names Lenni Lennapi and again the Delawares and Shawnese; and then the Six Nations—the Mohawks, Oneida, Onondago, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora. Their territory extended from Lakes Erie and Ontario to the waters of the Allegheny, Susquehanna and the Delaware.

Our valley was a favorite resort of the Indians, being one of the finest and most extensive valleys on the West Branch of the Susquehanna, lying about eight miles above the junction of the Northeast and West Branches of the Susquehanna, and extending some twenty miles west. It was a sort

of thoroughfare for the Indian passing to and from Shamokin town, their chief place of trading, lying on the Island, and on each side of the river. And although this section of country had been supposed to have been embraced in the different treaties with the Indians, yet, in the treaty of the proprietors with the Indians Nov. 1768, at Ft. Stanwix, all this northern portion of Penna. was purchased. And still we find the Indians unwilling to leave this section of the country till after peace was declared in 1783, and until which time many of the white inhabitants were massacred, and several times those who escaped had to flee to the Forts, and at the time of what was called the Big Runaway, in 1781, the whole white population had to flee to Dauphin and Lancaster counties.

We have alluded to these facts because some have supposed that owing to the state of things on these frontier settlements, that the time which tradition had fixed (at the time the Rev. Thos. Hood came to Buffalo,) as the time of the organization of Buffalo Church—the year 1773—was too early, owing to the state of things, especially the great danger to settlers from the Indians. And this calls on us here, to be the more particular in giving what information we may be able to obtain in reference to the early settlements on the West Branch of the Susquehanna. And so far as this Church and section of country is concerned, I shall now proceed to give as accurately as possible, all I have been able to obtain from State, Ecclesiastical and local history. And all I have been able to consult is Armor's History of the early proprietary Governors of Penna., Meginnis' History of the West Branch, The Minutes of the Synod of New York and Phila., and the account given me by Rev. Thos. Hood some forty years ago, in reference to the traditional history when he came to this valley seventy-two years since.

This section of country was visited as early as 1728 by Indian traders. The first missionary visit was by Count Zinzendorf in 1742, accompanied by Martin Mack and his wife, and by Conrad Weiser, an Indian interpreter. "After a long and tedious journey they arrived at Shamokin, and re-

ceived a cordial welcome from Shickelemy, the Indian Chief." As "the Count announced himself as a messenger of the living God, come to preach salvation; the Chief declared himself happy to receive and entertain an ambassador from the Great Spirit." He in a short time left Shamokin, and came a short distance up the West Branch to another town, where he visited Madam Montour, a French woman from Canada, who had married Roland Montour, Chief of the Seneca tribe, by whom she had several sons. This town was called Ostanwachin, some where near the mouth of the Chillisquaque creek, near the end of the mountain ridge running from that place on to Danville. Again, in 1745, Loskiel's History of Moravian Missions, says: "Bro. Martin Mack and wife spent two months as missionaries at Shamokin and neighborhood, visiting Long Island," opposite Jersey Shore. The same year, 1745, Shamokin was visited by the celebrated missionary among our Indian tribes, David Brainerd. He at that time made but a short visit, and then went down to the Island near the mouth of the Juniata. He then returned again in Aug., 1746, and went up the river as far as the Great Island, where there was a noted Indian town, intending to spend some considerable time on the Susquehanna, but owing to sickness, having night sweats and coughing up of blood, he made but a brief sojourn. In 1748 Bishop Camerhoff and Zeisberger, who came to establish a Moravian Mission, visited as far up the river as the Great Island.

And here the question may be asked, why was it that in these earlier days on the Susquehanna the traders and missionaries could travel among the Indians with so much more safety, and but an occasional murder of a white man heard of till some years later? The Indians were friendly till the English and French war, and as the French persuaded them that the English, who were already settling among them and encroaching on their hunting grounds, would soon drive them from the sepulchres of their fathers, they were easily induced to join with the French, leaving but few friendly to the English. It was while Robert H. Morris was Deputy Governor of Penna. from Oct., 1754, to Aug., 1756, that Great Britain de-

terminated to oppose the advance of the French from the lakes southward. In March, 1755, Gen. Braddock with two Regiments of the line, arrived from Ireland, at Alexandria, Va. Penna. had been called on to raise 3,000 recruits. Franklin met Gen. Braddock at Frederick, Md., and advised him to take his line of march through Pa. It is said Franklin having procured for him in Cumberland, York, and Lancaster counties 150 wagons, and 1500 pack horses, he set out for Fort DuQuense, or Fort Pitt, expecting to take it, and move rapidly on Forts Niagara and Frontignac. But he little knew the obstacles in his way. Armord describes it in the following language: "Finding only Indian trails he stopped to cut away the forests, build bridges, and construct roads, treating with contempt the advice of Washington to push forward rapidly with pack horses. By the time he had reached the Monongahela, the French who had been regularly advised of his movements, had had ample time to gather in reinforcements, and fire the spirits of the Indians for the conflict. On the morning of July 9, 1755, when within seven miles of Fort DuQuense, and while marching confidently on, the front and left flank of the column was suddenly assailed by an invisible foe. Momentary confusion ensued; but soon rallying, the troops moved in good order, the officers evincing admirable discipline and courage. But every tree concealed a foe, from which an unerring fire was delivered with deadly effect. Sir Peter Halkett, the second in command, was killed; Braddock was mortally wounded, and every mounted officer, save Washington, killed or wounded. Washington had two horses killed under him, and four bullets through his coat, but still kept his horse; and after seeing sixty-four out of eighty-five of his officers, and half of the privates killed or wounded, withdrew with the remnant of the forces, losing artillery and stores."

We have made this digression because immediately after this defeat of Gen. Braddock, the western frontier settlements being left unprotected, and the Indians having been taught to consider the English as their enemies, they began their slaughter of the white settlers. It is stated that, "In the be-

ginning of the year 1755, it was estimated that there were three thousand men capable of bearing arms west of the Susquehanna; and a twelvemonth later there were not a hundred." Some ten years previous to this a company of Scotch Irish had settled a few miles below Shamokin, on the west side of the Susquehanna, at and near Penns Creek. Within three months after Braddock's defeat, Oct. 15, 1755, a body of Indians fell on this settlement and some twenty-five men, women and children were all killed or taken captive, all except one wounded man. Their homes were burned and their fields laid waste.

In 1756 Gov. Morris sent Col. Clapham to build Fort Augusta, near Sunbury; and government spent eighty-five thousand pounds in building the various forts all the way from the Delaware, and on the Susquehanna, to the Maryland line.

In a few years the Indians became more quiet and from 1765 till the breaking out of the Revolutionary war the settlers began to press in and occupy the land. In the year 1765 a party from Cumberland county went up the West Branch as high as Great Island, and some of them settled where Lock Haven now stands. Among the earliest settlers in this immediate neighborhood, we believe, was Col. Kelly, who settled on his farm in 1768. Previous to this Robert Martin from Wyoming, originally from New Jersey, had come to Northumberland and "built a house and kept a tavern, whose house, it is said, was thronged with speculators, surveyors, and adventurers, who, after the purchase of 1768, at Fort Stanwix, came to explore and settle on the lands on the West Branch." Immediately after this treaty the first surveys were made for the proprietaries, called Manors, and then for the officers who had served in the French and Indian wars, and also a few privileged persons, for we find a special application was issued to Rev. Dr. Francis Allison for 1620 acres at the mouth of the Bald Eagle, the 4th of Feb., 1769. Then on the 3d of April the land office was thrown open to all desiring to take up lands, at five pounds sterling per hundred acres, and one penny per acre a

year quit rent. No person was allowed to take up more than 300 acres, without a special license. On the day the office was opened over 2,000 applications were made, and directed to be put in the hands of the Surveyor Generals.

Smith, the Surveyor of Cumberland county, had surveyed as early as June 1769, land as far west as Clearfield, and at Milesburg and Potter's Fort in Centre Co. In June, also, lands were surveyed in White Deer Valley, and the 1st of July in Black Hole, and 4th, 5th, and 6th of July in Nippenose. By the 31st of Aug., 1769, the applications amounted to 4,000. The lands in this neighborhood and west of this church were entered in Aug. of the same year. The farm on which Wm. Steans now lives was entered by Wm. Irvine Aug. 3, 1769, and the deed made out Aug. 24, and the adjoining farm on which his father lived was entered the next day.

We see, then, that in this immediate neighborhood were made some of the earliest settlements of this valley. Cumberland county, much further west than this, was settled many years previous to this section of the State, which the Indians clung to, till the last. Rev. Alex. Craighead preached by appointment of Pres. to the Silvers' Spring congregation in 1734. This congregation was first known as "the people over the Susquehanna." And the churches of Conodoguinet, that is Carlisle, Big Spring, or Newville, Middle Spring, still west of Shippensburg and Rocky Spring church, four miles from Chambersburg, and the Falling Spring church in Chambersburg, with others in that valley, were all organized some thirty years or more before the Buffalo church.

My grand father, Dr. Robert Cooper, received a call from Middle Spring, west of Shippensburg, in 1765, eight years previous to the organization of the Buffalo Church.

In the year 1772, a year previous to the organization of Buffalo Church, the county of Northumberland was organized out of the counties of Lancaster, Cumberland, Berks, Bedford and Northampton, during the administration of Lieut. Gov. Richard Penn, whose administration extended from Oct. 1771, to Aug., 1773.

And here it falls in our way to state the reason of the organization of the county of Northumberland at this time, as it is connected with the trouble which existed between the States of Connecticut and Pennsylvania. Conn. claimed that by the terms of its charter its western boundary was the Pacific Ocean. Preposterous as this seems, the language of the original grant was from ocean to ocean. And emigrants from Conn., known as the Susquehanna company, had settled in the Wyoming valley, which settlement had also sent on a party to the West Branch and settled near the town of Muncy. And as these had civil officers of their own, appointed by Conn., they set up their own town and county organizations. To the protestations of the Gov. of Penna. the Gov. of Conn. answered that they were acting in good faith under their original charter. And on submitting their case to the counsellors in London they obtained an opinion in their favor; and again in 1775, having laid the matter before the Continental Congress, they obtained a decision in their favor. This decision was rejected by the Assembly of Penna., and it was never finally settled till the Congress of the United States decided in favor of Pa. in 1802.

As we have stated, it was owing to this difficulty that in 1772 Northumberland county was organized to embrace all this disputed territory.

There were after this several pretty severe conflicts between the Pennsylvanians and these Connecticut settlers.

The first court was held in Northumberland county, at Fort Augusta, in April, 1772, at which time it was divided into six townships. Buffalo township, "Beginning at the mouth of Penns Creek, at the head of the Isle of Que, thence up the same to the forks, thence by a north line to the West Branch of the Susquehanna, thence down the West Branch to the forks, thence down the Susquehanna to place of beginning." It was in this year Col. Hunter, in command at Fort Augusta, ordered all the forts on the West Branch of the Susquehanna to be built or rebuilt. It was the year after the organization of North'd county that

the Buffalo Church was organized. We have made this perhaps too lengthy attempt to give you some idea of the state of things in this section of country, at the time of the organization of our Church. And as this year, 1773, was a stirring year in the colonies, we detain you a moment to copy a few remarks from *Armor's life of John Penn, Gov. from Aug., 1773, to 1776.* "Meetings were held in the capitals and chief towns to oppose the sale of tea, as the deliberate purpose of Parliament to establish the principle of taxation was seen in the tea act." At a meeting held in Phila., on the 18th of Oct., 1773, spirited resolutions were passed, in which it was asserted—"that the disposal of their own property is the inherent right of freemen; that there can be no property in that which another can, of right, take from us without our consent; that the claim of parliament to tax America, is, in other words, a claim of right to levy contributions on us at pleasure. That whoever shall, directly or indirectly, countenance this attempt, or in any wise aid and abet, in unloading, receiving, or vending the tea sent, or to be sent out, by the East India company, while it remains subject to the *payment of a duty here*, is an enemy to his country." "Of the ships sent, those for Phila. and New York, on learning the temper of the people, wisely turned back, and returned to England. That sent to Charleston was unladen, and the tea stored in a damp warehouse, where it rotted; and the vessels sent to Boston were boarded by parties disguised as Indians, who opened over three hundred chests, and poured the tea into the water, proclaiming 'Boston harbor a teapot to-night.'" England was so exasperated that vengeance was declared against Mass. and especially against Boston, which led to a union of the colonies and the convening of a Continental Congress the next year.

We shall now proceed to the consideration of what we may learn from Ecclesiastical history in reference to these times.

And here we might make the general complaint of all called to write up Church history, of the great unfaithful-

ness of the ancient fathers of the church in keeping church records. It would appear that most of the Church Sessions failed in the duty of keeping Sessional Records. This Church had no records of the session until 1835, when I came here.

From the Minutes of the Synod of New York and Phila., the earliest appointments were made "for the frontier settlements and the Indians," and in their report of having fulfilled their appointments there is no mention made of the particular localities in which they labored. As early as 1767 the Synod appoint men to missionate as far west as the Muskingum in Ohio. It is said, "The Synod appoint the Rev. John Brainerd and Robert Cooper to pay a visit to our frontier settlements and the Indians on Muskingum, and other places, and tarry with them at least three months this summer." Again, in 1768, "Mr. Anderson is appointed to take a tour on the western frontiers of this Province, to set off as soon as possible, and preach in the vacancies on these frontiers at least twelve Sabbaths." Again, in 1769, the Presbytery of Donegal is ordered to supply the western frontier of Penna. ten Sabbaths.

In 1770 is the first mention made of places in this section of the State, when Messrs. Elder, Tate, and Steel are appointed to supply between Fort Augusta and Juniata, and places adjacent, each two Sabbaths. And as this church is connected with Sunbury in the first call ever given to a pastor in this section of the State, it most probably was visited at one of the places adjacent. For we have already shown that lands had been taken up all around this, and settlements made one and two years before. In the year 1771, on the application of Rev. Robert Cooper, Synod allowed the Pres. of Donegal, which embraced this part of the State, the sum of fifteen pounds to pay supplies for the frontier. In the year following the organization of the Buffalo Church, in May, 1774, it is stated, "application was made by the Revs. Messrs. Robert Cooper and James Finley in behalf of the numerous and increasing vacancies on the extensive western frontier of Penna., praying that supplies may be afforded them by

the Synod; and that such as may be sent endeavor to *form them into congregations as far as they conveniently can.*" We see here that the supplies appointed by Synod were authorized, whenever they found places the people were wont to assemble for worship, there to organize them into a church and administer the ordinances. At the same meeting, May 1774, it is stated, "a petition was brought in and read from the Bald Eagle settlement, up the West Branch of the Susquehanna, earnestly praying for supplies to be sent to those parts." In answer to which, "Mr. Latta is appointed to supply up the West Branch of Susquehanna five Sabbaths in the months of October and November; and Mr. Samuel Dougal seven Sabbaths in July and August." Here, then, only one year after Buffalo is said to have been organized, we find the settlement fifty miles higher up the river applying for and receiving supplies.

Again, in the spring of 1776, some six weeks before the Declaration of Independence, it is said—"A supplication of the Presbyterian societies of Buffalo, Warrior Run and Penn's valley was brought in and read." "The Synod appoint Mr. Hugh White to supply four months within the bounds of Donegal Presbytery, at their discretion." We hear after this of no further application for supplies on the Susquehanna till after the close of the war in 1783.

In the next place we inquire what was the local history as to the organization of Buffalo Church? This, as we have said, fixes it in the year 1773. This fact I received from Mr. Hood in writing, when I came here in 1835, forty-one years ago last May. And why should there have been any difficulty in Mr. Hood's ascertaining the facts in the case, when he came here seventy-two years ago? There were numbers living then who were on the ground four or five years before the organization of the Church. Take, for instance, Col. Kelly, who settled here in 1768, five years previous to the organization of the Church, and did not die till 1832, in his 88th year. I will only mention one more, Capt. Jas. Thompson, one of the earliest settlers, who was taken prisoner by the Indians; he lived to be 93 years of age, and died

in 1837. I have seen him here at Buffalo Church, having walked the previous day across the mountains from Jersey Shore, then in the 91st or 92d year of his age. At the organization of Buffalo Church, several of them residing in the neighborhood, and participating in it, being still here in Mr. Hood's day, there can be no doubt of the correctness of the history. James McClenahan and Samuel Allen were its first Ruling Elders. The former had been ordained in Derry Church, now Dauphin county, and the latter in Silvers' Spring Church, Cumberland county. These gentlemen continued to officiate as Elders till 1781, when the congregation was broken up in consequence of the country being overrun by the Indians, no inhabitants remaining in this section of the country. In 1783, after the close of the war, the people returned, and in the same year Mr. McClenahan died; and Mr. Allen having died while the people were absent, it appears that the congregation were without Elders from 1783 until 1785, when Matthew Laird, who had been a Ruling Elder in Big Spring, came to reside in the congregation.

The first pastor of Buffalo Church was Hugh Morrison, who came to this country from Ireland in the fall of 1785, a licentiate under the care of the Pres. of Root. The first mention of his name we find in the Records of Synod, of May 18, 1786, where it is stated—"The Pres. of Donegal reported that they had, since our last, admitted Mr. Hugh Morrison, a licensed candidate from the Pres. of Root, in Ireland, to preach in their bounds, but his testimonials are not here to lay before Synod." As this was the meeting of Synod that divided the Pres. of Donegal into the two Presbyteries of Baltimore and Carlisle, the next year the Pres. of Carlisle present to Synod the testimonials of Mr. Morrison, of which the following is the record: "The testimonials of Mr. Hugh Morrison, a probationary from the Presbytery of Root, in the kingdom of Ireland, were presented by Carlisle Pres., and were sustained by Synod." In May, 1787, a call was given to Mr. Morrison by the Buffalo congregation, in connection with the congregations of Northumberland and Lewisburg. And in the records of Synod, May 22, 1788, we find the fol-

lowing record : "Carlisle Pres. reported, that they had, since our last, ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry Mr. Hugh Morrison in the pastoral charge of Sunbury, Northumberland town, and Buffalo Valley." As I have been enabled to obtain a copy of the call, and it is somewhat different from the calls as now made out, it may be interesting to some to hear it :

"Mr. Hugh Morrison, preacher of the Gospel, &c. : Sir— We, the subscribers, members of Buffalo, Sunbury, and Northumberland, having never in these places had the stated administrations of the Gospel ordinances, yet highly prizing the same, and having a view to the advancement of the kingdom of Christ and the spiritual edification of ourselves and families, have set ourselves to obtain that blessing among us ; and therefore, as we have had the opportunity of some of your labors in these places, and are satisfied with your soundness, piety, and ministerial ability to break unto us the bread of life, we do most heartily and sincerely in the name of the Shepherd of the flock, Jesus Christ, call and invite you to come and take the pastoral charge and oversight of us, in the Lord : and for your encouragement we do promise, if God shall dispose your heart to embrace this our call, that we will pay a dutiful attention to the word and ordinances of God, by you administered, that we will be subject to your admonitions and reproofs, should our falls and miscarriages expose us thereto, will submit to the discipline of the church exercised by you, agreeably to the word of God, and also that we will treat your person with friendship and respect, and behave in all things toward you as becometh a Christian society to behave toward their pastor who labors among them in word and doctrine. Farther as we are persuaded that those who serve at the altar, should live by the altar, we do promise in order that you may be as much as possible freed from worldly encumbrances, to provide for your comfortable and honorable maintainence in the manner set forth in our subscription papers attending this call, during your continuance with us, as our regular pastor. In witness of

our hearty desire to have you settled among us, we have hereunto set our names this 31st day of May, 1787."

The above was signed by 17 from Northumberland, 8 from Sunbury, and 48 from Buffalo. "We the undersigned do hereby appoint the Rev. Mr. Wilson, with the annexed call for the Rev. Mr. Morrison, to be by him presented to the Moderator of Carlisle Pres. for the purpose mentioned. Signed by John Byers, Wm. Gray and Abram Scott for Sunbury; Wm. Clark for Buffalo, and Wm. Cook and Jas. Hepburn for Northumberland town." The call was for 220 pounds, of which Buffalo paid 75 pounds, a little more than one-third.

Mr. Morrison continued the pastor of these three congregations for upwards of fourteen years, the pastoral relation having been dissolved Nov. 12, 1801.

We are unable to give any of the statistics of this congregation during Mr. Morrison's time, with the exception that soon after his settlement there was an election for Elders, and Walter Clark, John Linn, Wm. Irvine, David Watson, John Reznor and Joseph Allen were chosen and ordained. Messrs. Clark and Allen, a few years afterwards, removed to the west, the others continued to act as Elders till their death. About the year 1800 Mr. Wm. Clingan, an Elder from the Donegal Church, moved within the bounds of Buffalo Church, and was added to the session not long afterwards. We have not been able to ascertain anything in reference to the number of Church members during the ministry of Mr. Morrison. There were but sixty members at the time of Mr. Hood's settlement some three years later. During Mr. Morrison's time there was no other congregation in this section of the country, on the west side of the Susquehanna, and all the church-going people attended at Buffalo Church.

After Mr. Morrison left, it appears there was no attempt made by this church to unite with the churches of Sunbury and Northumberland, for the reason, no doubt, that those churches considered themselves able to support a pastor.

The Buffalo Church then looked to the Church of Wash-

ington, White Deer Valley, to unite with them in supporting a pastor.

In the year 1803 the congregations of Buffalo and Washington were visited by Mr. James Magraw, a licentiate of the Presbytery of New Castle, to whom they gave a call, which was not accepted, he having about the same time received a call from a couple of Churches in Maryland.

In the winter of 1804 Mr. Thos. Hood, a licentiate of the Pres. of New Castle, visited the congregations of Buffalo and Washington, to whom they gave a call that summer, which he accepted at the fall meetings of Pres., and was at that time dismissed to put himself under the care of the Pres. of Huntingdon, which had been organized in 1795, and embraced the territory now included in the Pres. of Northumberland, which was not organized till 1811.

Mr. Hood was received by the Pres. of Huntingdon at their meeting at Spring Creek, April 16, 1805, and was ordained and installed Oct. 2 of the same year. In the private notes kept by James McClellan, Esq., we find the following :

Aug. 2, 1804. Mr. Hood has arrived. Preached last Sabbath. Introduced Watt's imitation of the Psalms. Members are offended on that account. Whether he will accept our call, we cannot tell.

Oct. 2. Mr. Morrison is now dead. What will be the fate of Buffalo, God only knows. Mr. Hood is not expected to settle here.

Oct. 24, 1804. Mr. Hood has written something on the subject of coming up, giving encouragement ; what it is have not exactly heard.

Dec. 1804. Mr. Hood has visited us, has accepted the call, he has preached three Sabbaths, and gone down to his family.

Oct. 9, 1805. Mr. Hood has preached to us six months ; stood his trial for ordination last week ; was ordained and installed Oct. 2. Mr. Stewart preached the sermon and Mr. Bryson gave the charge.

Again, in April, 1806, he notes, "Mr. Hood has preached to the good acceptance of the people generally."

At the meeting of Pres. in Oct., 1805, at which Mr. Hood was ordained, the Churches of Northumberland and Sunbury, that had been previously connected with Buffalo, gave a call to the Rev. Isaac Grier, then pastor of the congregations of Great Island and Pine Creek, which was accepted; and he moved to Northumberland in April, 1806.

Mr. Hood continued to give half his time to the Washington Church till the spring of 1808, when, with the consent of the "Pres., he gave one-fourth of his time to Mifflinburg, the western part of his Buffalo charge. Buffalo had three-fourths of his time from that till 1812, when the one-fourth of his time, which had been given to Mifflinburg, was given to Milton; that Church having been organized in Dec., 1811, the year in which the Pres. of Northumberland was organized.

At a meeting of the Pres. in Washington Church, in April, 1819, the pastoral relation of Mr. Hood to that Church was dissolved; and at the same time application was made by the Church of Milton for that fourth of his time, which was granted; from which time Mr. Hood preached alternately between the two congregations of Buffalo and Milton until his resignation in April, 1835.

At the time of Mr. Hood's settlement in Buffalo, there were but 60 members, and in 1828 there were 273.

The largest addition at any one time was 35, in the fall of 1824, after the congregation had been visited by the Rev N. Patterson, under whose preaching there was a considerable revival. The largest addition at any previous time was 20.

During Mr. Hood's time there were three elections for elders. Not long after his settlement Thomas Howard, Andrew McLenahan, James M'Clellan, and Samuel Templeton were elected and ordained. Some years afterwards, Thos. Clingan, James Geddes, and Robt. Foster, were chosen and ordained. And in 1832, Col. Samuel Barber, Wm. Foster, and Robt. G. H. Hayes.

At the time of Mr. Hood's resignation, April 1835, the three elders chosen in 1832, in connection with Mr. Thos.

Howard, who was chosen soon after Mr. Hood's settlement, composed the session of this Church. Two others, Thos. Clingan and Jas. Geddes, were still living, but had been chosen elders at the organization of the Church in Lewisburg.

Although in 1828 Buffalo Church had 273 members, yet in 1835, when Mr. Hood left there were but 58, owing chiefly to the organization of five Churches out of it.

The first of these organizations had taken place in 1818 or 1819. This arose out of a disagreement on the psalmody question. After Mr. Hood came, the question was settled for some years, through an agreement to use both Watts and Rouse alternately. This answered for some years, but the clerks finally got tired of raising the tune, when Rouse was given out, and they were dropped. Two good old elders, who felt greatly grieved at this result, felt in conscience bound, to start up a church where their mouths should not be closed in singing praises to God. This congregation was formed in Mifflinburg by Messrs. McClellan and Templeton. Their occasional supplies for the first two or three years were mostly from the western part of the State, from the Associate, or Associate Reformed bodies, generally called seceders. Their *stated* supplies were from the Associate Reformed body, Rev. George Junkin, and Rev. David Kirkpatrick. Rev. G. Junkin commenced to preach in the fall of 1821 and was preaching there occasionally in 1823. He was followed by Mr. Kirkpatrick, who, in Oct, 1827, with the congregation, made application to the Pres. of Northumberland, and were received by them from the Associate Reformed body.

The next Church formed out of members from the Buffalo Church was in 1831, when a small Church was organized in White Deer Township, called the Bethel Church, taking off the Northern part of the territory. And then, in 1832, another Church, by order of Pres., was organized by Rev. N. Todd, at Laurel Run, taking off the most Western part.

In 1833 a Church was organized in Lewisburg, taking off the most Eastern part of the territory. In 1841, a congregation was organized in New Berlin, taking off from the South-

ern portion. And again in 1842, a Church was organized at Hartleton, which took the place of the Laurel Run Church.

These Churches being made up chiefly of members that in an earlier day attended at Buffalo, the result as we have already stated, was, that although Buffalo numbered 273 members in 1828, in 1835 when Mr. Hood left, there were but fifty-eight. Although some of these Churches were not regularly organized until Mr. Hood gave up preaching in 1835, yet for some time previously they had been regular preaching places.

I have now come to that portion of the history of Buffalo Church which falls within the last 41 years, since I commenced preaching to this congregation, on the 3d day of May, the first Sabbath of May, 1835.

As we, at this day, when attempting to give a history of the former pastors, are anxious to learn all we can of their licensure and previous history, it may be proper for the information of the historian of future times, to state that I entered the Theological Seminary of Princeton in the fall of 1829. While in my minority, I took charge of the Danville Academy, and taught for two years; and then entered Dickinson College at Carlisle, in the Junior Class, half advanced. After leaving College, I again took charge of the Danville Academy for a year and a half, until I left for Princeton Theo. Sem. After remaining there a year and a half, I left and taught another year, as a tutor in the Academy of Flatbush, Long Island. I then returned to the Seminary and finished the full course of three years, leaving that in the fall of 1833. I had been licensed by the Pres. of North'd at Warrior Run, in October, 1832, one year previous to my finishing the course in the Seminary.

The first year after leaving Princeton, I supplied the congregations of Washington, in White Deer Valley, and Shamokin in Northumberland Co. In October, 1834, when I accepted a call from the Washington congregation for half my time, I gave up Shamokin and gave that half of my time to the Bethel Church in White Deer township, until the next Spring, April, 1835, when Mr. Hood re-

signed the charge of Buffalo Church ; after which I gave one half of my time to Bethel in connection with Buffalo ; the first six months preaching to the two Churches every other Sabbath, in the morning and afternoon alternately. After which time I gave the morning service to Buffalo, and the afternoon to the small congregation of Bethel.

My first sermon at Buffalo was under rather discouraging circumstances, having but a handful of hearers, the greater part of the congregation, with Mr. Hood, being at the funeral of an aged widow, Mrs. Young, a member of the Buffalo Church. But, through the kind Providence of our merciful heavenly Father, things have been much more favorable than any one perhaps at that day could have anticipated. Here was a small country congregation, not consisting of one fourth the members it had had but eight years previously, surrounded with towns rising in importance, and Churches of our own and other denominations in all of them. The country so changed in its character that what was an almost entirely English population in the early history of this Church, had now become more than three-fourths German, and they, with their Churches on all sides, in the towns and in the country.

It was by many expected that it would be but a few years at most, till this congregation would be dissolved, and the few Presbyterians that remained would be driven to abandon this ancient place of worship, near which the mortal remains of the fathers repose and to seek for themselves and their posterity new places of worship within the towns. But for Buffalo Church a kind Providence has as yet ordered otherwise, the Church having had a slow but regular increase, though under circumstances in which it could scarcely have been looked for ; and it now has, and has had for many years double the membership it had forty-one years ago, when I commenced my labors here.

The additions have been with great regularity, and under the ordinary means of grace. The influences of the Holy Spirit have descended on us, "like rain on the mown grass, as showers that water the earth." We have at times had

some more interest than at others, yet we have never had but one protracted meeting and that nearly 36 years ago, and none but the ordinary services excepting that for the last 22 years we have had, in connection with our communion season in the winter, services for three days previous to the Sabbath.

The greatest number of additions in one year was in 1854, when we received thirty members; the most in any other year was 15, and two years 14 each. We have not passed through any great excitement or general revival; our increase has been more of a steady, constant growth. Since my ministry in Buffalo, 280 have been received into the Church, and including those received in the other portion of my charge in the former part of my ministry over 550. I have administered the rite of baptism 645 times, and married 191 couple. Although it is 41 years since I commenced preaching in Buffalo Church, yet one year of that time, from Oct., 1852, to Oct., 1853, I was absent, having accepted a call from the Washington Church that year for the whole of the time. During the first six months of that year the church was vacant, having but an occasional sermon. After an absence of six months, I was solicited to return and become the pastor for the whole of my time, which I refused, with a partial promise if they could not unite on a man in the next six months, I might return.

Mr. Philip Melich, a licentiate of this Pres., supplied the Church for those six months.

In Oct., 1853, I accepted their call for all my time and returned.

And here I may remark, that although the territory of the Buffalo Church had been much abridged by the organization of the various churches which we have mentioned, yet it has always embraced, and does yet, quite an extent of country in a line East and West, a considerable portion of the congregation from west of the church living at a distance of five to eight miles. This was owing to the principle on which the church in Mifflinburg was organized, that of a difference of opinion on psalmody; and its being organized

in connection with another denomination. And after its reception by our Pres., the same version of Psalms was used for upwards of twenty-four years.

I mention these things here because to those not knowing the facts in the case it may appear strange to see at this time, and ever since the reception of the Associate Reformed Church under the care of this Pres., two Presbyterian Churches occupying the same ground.

We have seen, that in the early history of this church Mr. Hood preached one-fourth of his time in Mifflinburg for the convenience of the upper part of this congregation, till he was called to give it up, in order that he might give that time to Milton, after the organization of the church there. And after the reception of the Associate Reformed Church, that portion of the inhabitants of Mifflinburg belonging to the Buffalo congregation, together with those lying west of it, as will be seen by the Minutes of the Pres., with the consent of Mr. Hood, their pastor, at the next meeting of Pres., after the reception of the Associate Reformed Church, petitioned Pres. for the half of Mr. Todd's time, who was then teacher of the Mifflinburg Academy, to preach to them in Mifflinburg on the Sabbath which Mr. Hood did not preach to them in the Buffalo Church, which request was granted and Mr. Todd supplied the Buffalo Church for six years and a half, preaching to them every other Sabbath in Mifflinburg. Soon after I came to preach in Buffalo, Mr. Todd left Mifflinburg, and half of my time being given to another charge, I was unable to give the western part of Buffalo congregation any preaching but that at the Buffalo Church, until after I received a call for the whole of my time. Some four or five years after I commenced preaching to the western part of the congregation in the town of Mifflinburg, the Buffalo congregation was charged with acting disorderly in having preaching in Mifflinburg; and having carried it up to Pres., they declared the charge slanderous in the following words: "Presbytery say that the assertion, that Mr. Grier has acted disorderly in preaching in Mifflinburg is contradicted by the admitted Records of

the former action of Pres., respecting these two churches." Eight years afterwards the subject was brought up again in Pres., and carried up to the General Assembly, and terminated entirely in our favor.

As I have already mentioned, the four elders composing the session of this Church, when Mr. Hood resigned in 1835, were Thos. Howard, Sr., Col Samuel Barber, Wm. Foster and Robert G. H. Hayes. But one of these was living when I preached to you my quarter of a century sermon, Mr. Wm. Foster, who was then sitting before me in his venerable old age, the last representative of the session of the former pastor. I addressed him in those beautiful lines of the poet:

"Old soldier of the cross, 'tis well with thee;
Thy warfare is nigh finished, and soon thou wilt gaze
On that bright country where thy God shalt be;
The never setting sun, and thy Lord
Will lead thee through green pastures,
Where the still and living waters play;
And thou shalt stand a prince 'mongst princes,
When the king makes up his jewels."

These members of the session died in the following order: Mr. Thos. Howard, Sr., died Feb., 1842; Col. Samuel Barber March, 1846; Robt. G. H. Hayes May, 1854, Wm. Foster March, 1865.

We have had several elections for ruling elders since I came to Buffalo. The first was in Oct., 1840, when Mr. James Dale and Hugh Wilson, Jr., were chosen and ordained. Mr. James Dale died in Oct., 1862; and Mr. Hugh Wilson, who had removed to Freeport, Ill., in 1858, died in 1874.

The next election was in 1854, when Jas. McCreight and Thos. Howard were chosen and ordained. Mr. McCreight died in 1862, and Thos. Howard removed to Lewisburg in 1857.

In 1855 Col. Robert B. Barber, who, thirteen years previously, had been dismissed from this Church to New Berlin, and had been chosen a ruling elder there, returned to this Church, and was chosen an elder.

In January, 1858, Mr. Laird Howard and John V. Barber

were chosen and ordained. Mr. Howard was dismissed to Lewisburg in 1868, where he died two years afterwards.

Mr. Wm. Steans was elected in 1862; and in 1871 James Mathers, Samuel S. Barber, Robert Foster, and James Lawson, were added to the session. Mr. Jas. Mathers died in 1874; and the following six now compose the session: Col. Robt. B. Barber, Jno. V. Barber, Wm. Steans, Samuel S. Barber, Robert Foster, and Jas. Lawson.

Buffalo in the more than a century of her existence has had but three pastors, with a few occasional supplies. Mr. Morrison was pastor for a little over fourteen years, and lived three years after his resignation, dying in Sunbury in Sept., 1804. Mr. Hood was pastor for thirty-one years, and lived thirteen years after his resignation, and died in Lewisburg March 17, 1848. It was 41 years the first Sabbath of last May since I commenced preaching to this Church.

There have been three churches built on this ground. The first building was a log building, and standing near to the present building. Originally there were ten acres of land; five acres each having been given the Church by two proprietors. Consequently, the first church was built on the line in order to hold each portion. What year this building was erected can not be now ascertained. The second building was the stone church, built near the road in 1816 and 1817, and on the tract now held by the Church, the other five acres having been lost to the Church on the sale of the farm to which it had belonged, through the carelessness of the congregation. From some notes kept at the time of the building of the stone church, by Jas. McClellan, I find the following:

"Feb. 21, 1816.—The congregation met. Mr. Wm. Clingan was appointed Chairman, and Jas. McClellan Sec'y. Resolved to build a stone meeting house 60 feet long and 35 wide. Wm. Clingan, Dr. Robt. Van Valzah, Hugh Wilson, Christopher Johnston, Thos. Howard and Jas. McClellan were appointed the building committee. Wm. Clingan, Treasurer. Afterward altered the size of the house to 52

feet by 40 ft. To pay the carpenter \$665.00, and the mason \$75.00

July 23, 1816.—The foundation of the church is laid.

Aug. 22.—At noon the building was at the square.

Dec. 29, 1816.—The first sermon was preached in the new house by Rev. Asa Dunham from Neh. 4 ; 6., "For the people had a mind to work."

March 9, 1817.—Mr. Hood preached the first sermon from the new desk, from John 6 ; 38, 39, on predestination.

April 5, 1846.—The last sermon was preached in the stone church by Rev. Isaac Grier from Matt. 28 ; 8, "I know that ye seek Jesus that was crucified."

The present brick building was finished by the 13th of Nov., 1846, having been commenced in April. Dr. Yeomans, of Danville, preached the dedication sermon. Mr. Hood preached the next day, and on Sabbath we had our first communion in this house.

Of the 58 members of the Church, when I came here, four are still remaining with us. I believe two are still living in Lewisburg. Of the sixteen ministers who composed the Pres. when I was licensed, two still live. Of many of us here to-day, indeed of all we may say, in the language of Job—"When a few years are come, then we shall go the way, whence we shall not return." Or in language of Watts—

"Our life is on the wing.

And death is ever nigh.

The moment when our lives begin

We all begin to die.

But if our days must fly,

We'll keep their end in sight ;

We'll spend them all in wisdom's way,

And let them speed their flight.

They'll waft us sooner o'er

This life's tempestuous sea ;

Soon we shall reach the peaceful shore

Of bliss eternity "

And as none of us know what a day may bring forth, or how soon we may be numbered with our fathers who have gone before us, and the only true wisdom for one and

all, is, to be daily living in preparation for that great change, the great end for which God has been giving you the means of grace you have so long enjoyed in this hallowed place; see to it that these privileges are improved before eternity bursts upon you. Our prayer is that they may not rise up in the judgment day to the condemnation of any of us; but through the abundant mercy of God we may all be prepared to receive that welcome plaudit—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."